

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 23, 2008

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SENATE BILL

No. 1629

Introduced by Senator Steinberg

(Principal coauthor: Senator Romero)

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Jones)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members ~~Nunez and Arambula~~ *Arambula, Huffman, Laird, and Nunez*)

February 22, 2008

An act to add Article 14.5 (commencing with Section 8300) to Chapter 2 of Part 6 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, relating to state preschool programs.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1629, as amended, Steinberg. State preschool programs: Early Learning Quality Improvement System Commission.

Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to administer state preschool programs, including part-day and preschool appropriate programs for prekindergarten children 3 to 5 years of age, inclusive, in educational development, health services, social services, nutritional services, parent education and participation, evaluation, and staff development.

This bill would establish the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Commission to develop a framework for improving program quality and a graduated funding framework that identifies necessary resources. The commission would consist of 18 members. The commission would be required to develop the policy and plan for an Early Learning Quality Improvement System, and would be required to submit a report on its recommendations to the Legislature and the

Governor by December 31, 2009. The bill would require the State Department of Education to provide staff to support the commission, and would require the ~~commission~~ *Superintendent* to apply to the California Children and Families Commission for funding to cover costs. The bill would specify that the Early Learning Quality Improvement System *may* be phased in ~~to the extent at the discretion of the Legislature~~ as funds are made available. The bill would become operative only if AB 2759 of the 2008–09 Regular Session of the Legislature is enacted and becomes effective on or before January 1, 2009.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) Learning begins at the earliest stages of life and research
- 4 shows that preschool is a proven investment in the academic
- 5 success of children and their success later in life. A high-quality
- 6 preschool system would benefit California children, the state's
- 7 systems of public and higher education, its families and students,
- 8 and its economy overall.
- 9 (b) Effective preschool provides eager young learners with early
- 10 academic and social skills that prepare them for later learning.
- 11 Developing these skills requires developmentally appropriate,
- 12 intentional instruction from skilled teachers.
- 13 (c) Unfortunately, too many children are turned away from
- 14 preschool, and the children who lack access to preschool are
- 15 disproportionately children of color, children whose home language
- 16 is not English, and children whose parents did not graduate from
- 17 high school. Research has shown that only one-half of all eligible
- 18 children in California are enrolled in a state preschool or the federal
- 19 Head Start program.
- 20 (d) Currently, California's preschool programs consist of both
- 21 state and federally funded programs for the provision of part-day
- 22 and full-day preschool and child care.
- 23 (e) According to the National Institute of Early Education
- 24 Research, California's state preschool programs meet only four of
- 25 10 benchmarks for quality preschool. A vast body of research

1 shows that only high-quality preschool results in the child outcomes
2 and ~~cost-benefits~~ *cost benefits* widely attributed to preschool.

3 (f) The myriad of state child development programs that serve
4 children 3 to 5 years of age, inclusive, are unnecessarily complex;
5 programs are not rewarded or given enough support to achieve the
6 high-quality learning environments that our most disadvantaged
7 children need and deserve.

8 (g) In order to take full advantage of the integral role that a
9 quality preschool system plays in helping prepare children for
10 school, which would benefit the state's most vulnerable pupils and
11 children from low-income families, including English language
12 learners, California must create a more coherent and efficient
13 publicly funded preschool program and lay the groundwork for
14 high quality. Consolidating and streamlining the state's preschool
15 program within existing revenues and expenditures and creating
16 a system that rewards programs that provide higher quality learning
17 environments would greatly increase California's ability to bridge
18 the achievement gap.

19 (h) Making the necessary investments to expand the state's
20 preschool system while the state faces a budget shortfall will be
21 difficult, but important steps can be taken now to put in place the
22 framework for a high-quality prekindergarten system upon which
23 future expansion can be built.

24 SEC. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature to establish the Early
25 Learning Quality Improvement System Commission to develop a
26 framework for improving program quality and a graduated funding
27 framework that identifies the necessary resources for programs to
28 achieve and maintain higher quality, and the support and
29 opportunity for teachers to reach higher levels of education.

30 SEC. 3. Article 14.5 (commencing with Section 8300) is added
31 to Chapter 2 of Part 6 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education
32 Code, to read:

33
34 Article 14.5. Early Learning Quality Improvement System
35 Commission
36

37 8300. (a) The Early Learning Quality Improvement System
38 Commission is hereby established in the state government. The
39 commission shall consist of 18 members as follows:

- 1 (1) The Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shall chair
2 and convene the commission, or his or her designee.
- 3 (2) The Secretary of Education or his or her designee.
- 4 (3) The President pro Tempore of the Senate or his or her
5 designee.
- 6 (4) The Speaker of the Assembly or his or her designee.
- 7 (5) The ~~Chair~~ *Chairperson* of the California Children and
8 Families Commission or his or her designee.
- 9 (6) The ~~University of California Office of the President~~
10 *President of the University of California* or his or her designee.
- 11 (7) The Chancellor of the California State University or his or
12 her designee.
- 13 (8) The Chancellor of the California Community College system
14 or his or her designee.
- 15 (9) The ~~Chair~~ *Chairperson* of the California Commission on
16 Teacher Credentialing or his or her designee.
- 17 (10) The Director of *the Department of Social Services* or his
18 or her designee.
- 19 (11) The Governor shall appoint one representative from each
20 of the following communities, and the Speaker of the Assembly
21 and President pro Tempore of the Senate shall collaborate in
22 appointing one representative from each of the following
23 communities:
- 24 (A) Early care and education.
- 25 (B) The K-12 public school system.
- 26 (C) English language learners.
- 27 (D) Parents.
- 28 (b) The commission shall seek expertise from the following
29 areas: English language development; exceptional needs; workforce
30 development; facilities development; technical assistance; and
31 local quality improvement systems.
- 32 (c) The commission shall meet no less frequently than each
33 quarter of the fiscal year and at the call of the ~~chair~~ *chairperson*
34 at a time and location convenient to the public, as ~~it~~ *the chairperson*
35 may deem appropriate. All meetings shall be open to the public in
36 accordance with Article 9 (commencing with Section 11120) of
37 Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government
38 Code.
- 39 (d) The appointed members of the commission shall serve at
40 the pleasure of their appointing authority.

(e) The members of the commission shall be entitled to reimbursement for expenses and members appointed pursuant to paragraph (11) of subdivision (a) shall be entitled to a per diem of one hundred dollars (\$100) per day.

8301. (a) The commission shall develop the policy and implementation plan for an Early Learning Quality Improvement System for the state and shall submit a report containing its recommendations for the creation of an Early Learning Quality Improvement System to the Legislature and the Governor by December 31, 2009. The report shall address, but need not be limited to, the following four elements of a quality improvement system:

(1) The development of a preschool quality rating system. The commission shall consider consumer awareness so that parents receive accurate information about the type of program in which their children are enrolled. The commission also shall consider, but need not be limited to, the following features of high quality preschool programs:

(A) Developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate practices.

(B) Staff qualifications and professional development and education needs.

(C) Staff compensation and retention.

(D) Group size and ratios.

(E) Learning environment.

(F) Regulatory compliance.

(G) Articulation with systems of care for children from birth to three five years of age, and with the K-12 public school system.

(H) The inclusion of children with exceptional needs.

(I) English language learner support.

(J) Family involvement.

(2) The development of a graduated funding model aligned with the quality rating system that provides the necessary resources for preschool programs to achieve higher quality levels, and that supports continuous program quality improvement.

(3) An assessment and analysis of the existing early care and education infrastructure including an identification of the strengths, gaps, and barriers to achieving higher quality early learning programs. ~~This analysis shall identify strategies that ensure the existing early care and education workforce, which reflects the~~

1 cultural and linguistic diversity of California, has the opportunity
2 to meet any higher levels of education qualifications recommended
3 programs. *This analysis shall identify strategies that support and*
4 *build upon the existing diversity of the early care and education*
5 *workforce, that reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of*
6 *California, and that ensures the existing workforce has the*
7 *opportunity to meet any levels of education qualifications*
8 *recommended by the commission, while also meeting the diverse*
9 *needs of California's young children.*

10 (4) The development of strategies for addressing children from
11 birth to ~~three~~ five years of age within the Early Learning Quality
12 Improvement System.

13 (b) The commission shall conduct no less than four public
14 hearings in different parts of the state to ensure that the commission
15 obtains meaningful public input prior to submitting its report to
16 the Governor and the Legislature.

17 8302. The State Department of Education shall provide staff
18 support to the commission.

19 8303. ~~The commission~~ *No General Fund expenditures shall*
20 *be required to fund the work of the commission. The commission*
21 *shall be established only after the Superintendent applies to and*
22 *obtains funds from the California Children and Families*
23 *Commission or other sources. The Superintendent shall apply to*
24 *the California Children and Families Commission for funding to*
25 *cover commission costs, including, but not limited to, staff support,*
26 *travel expenses, and per diem costs. The commission is also*
27 *authorized to seek funding from other sources. costs.*

28 8304. The Early Learning Quality Improvement System ~~shall~~
29 *may be phased in to the extent that at the discretion of the*
30 *Legislature as federal, state, or local public funds are made*
31 *available.*

32 SEC. 4. This act shall become operative only if Assembly Bill
33 2759 of the 2008–09 Regular Session of the Legislature is enacted
34 and becomes operative on or before January 1, 2009.

35 SEC. 5. This act shall be binding upon the University of
36 California only to the extent that the Regents of the University of
37 California, by resolution, make it binding.